

New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA)

Clean Energy Communities

LEADERSHIP ROUND

Guidance Document

Program Opportunity Notice (PON) 3298

Revised June 2023



CLEAN ENERGY COMMUNITIES

NYSERDA's Clean Energy Communities program is for local government officials and staff who want their communities to benefit from the new clean energy economy but struggle with tight budgets and limited staff.

By providing grants, coordinator support, and clear guidance for implementing a range of high-impact clean energy actions, NYSERDA is helping local governments save money, grow the local economy, and improve the environment.

Join the Clean Energy Communities Leadership Round to earn grants and recognition while driving the next level of impact.

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INTRODUCTION

Local governments play a critical role in affecting energy choices in our communities, both in terms of government operations, and also across homes, businesses, and community institutions. Municipal leaders increasingly recognize that clean energy is not just good for the environment. Using resources more efficiently is helping save taxpayer dollars, create jobs, and drive economic development right here in our local communities.

Launched in August 2016, the Clean Energy Communities program provides grants, coordinator support, and a clear path forward to local governments that demonstrate leadership by completing NYSERDA-selected high-impact actions. Since program launch, hundreds of local governments – large, small, urban, rural, and suburban - have completed high-impact actions through the program. Hundreds of local governments have earned the Clean Energy Community designation. In every region of New York State, communities are implementing an exciting array of clean energy projects supported by grant awards. In many cases, local governments with no previous history of participation in NYSERDA programs are now deeply involved in clean energy and sustainability.

To build on this success, the Clean Energy Communities Leadership Round was launched in January 2021. The Leadership Round is a powerful new update to the original Clean Energy Communities to make the program more impactful, innovative, and sustainable over time. In the Leadership Round, communities continue to work with regional coordinators to prioritize and implement high-impact actions, apply for grants that emphasize new activity and impact, and earn new forms of recognition. All the existing high-impact actions are retained, although some are expanded, and some new actions have been added. Communities do not need to be designated Clean Energy Communities to earn grants through the Leadership Round. All communities are invited to participate.

Key advantages to participating in the Clean Energy Communities program include:

- ✓ **Flexible grant funding with no local cost share**
- ✓ **Free coordinator support**
- ✓ **Recognition for your community's leadership**

The Clean Energy Communities Leadership Round is funded through the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) and the Clean Energy Fund (CEF). The total funding available for Long Island communities is \$1.7 million.

Eligible Applicants

Municipalities (county, city, town, or village governments) in New York State are eligible to apply for funds. Regions are defined as Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) regions. Municipalities will serve as the main point of contact to NYSERDA for all project-related matters.

Application Due Date

NYSERDA will accept applications for PON 3298 on a rolling basis until 3:00p.m. Eastern Time on December 31, 2025, until funds are exhausted, or until the solicitation is revised or closed by NYSERDA, whichever comes first.

Program Updates

Program details and requirements may change from time to time to maximize program impact. Any changes to this solicitation will be posted on the Clean Energy Communities website at www.nyserda.ny.gov/cec.

Questions

Program questions may be directed to Chris Reohr at 866-NYSERDA ext. 3363 or cec@nyserda.ny.gov
Contractual questions may be directed to Lori Armstrong at 866-NYSERDA ext. 3142

HOW TO PARTICIPATE

The first step is to review this guidance document to become acquainted with all program requirements.

✓ Connect with a Clean Energy Communities Coordinator

Clean Energy Communities Coordinators are based in each region of the state to help municipal staff navigate the program. To access this support, please send an email to cec@nyserda.ny.gov or visit www.nyserda.ny.gov/cec.

✓ Complete High-Impact Actions

NYSERDA has developed a list of high-impact actions that communities can take to save energy and improve the environment. The local government completes the action by complying with a specific set of requirements. More information on how to meet the requirements for each action and what documentation is required, is provided on pages 8 to 23. Toolkits for each high-impact action are available at www.nyserda.ny.gov/cec. The toolkits include step-by-step guidance, template legislation, calculators, and other resources.

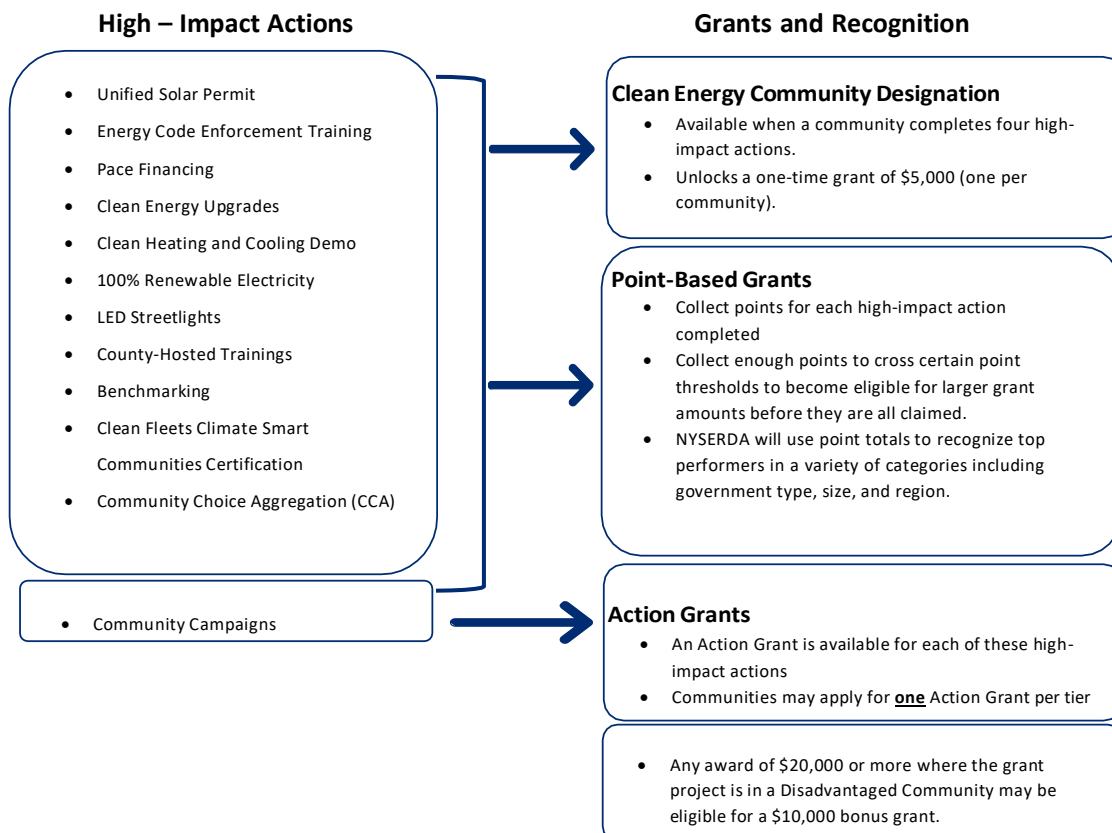
To earn credit for completing high-impact actions, please visit www.nyserda.ny.gov/cec to submit action item documentation that meets the unique requirements detailed in this guidance document. NYSERDA will review the submitted documentation and provide notification that it has been approved or if it is incomplete and needs to be resubmitted. Applicants are encouraged to submit documentation in stages as each high-impact action is completed.

✓ Earn the Clean Energy Community Designation

The Clean Energy Community designation is available to communities that complete four high-impact actions. At least two (2) of the high-impact actions must be completed after August 1, 2016.

✓ Apply for Grants and Get Recognized

There are several ways to earn grants and recognition through the Clean Energy Communities program. See the next page for details on the different grant types. NYSERDA will recognize communities with awards in categories including, but not limited to, top performers by action, region, community size, and government type.



GRANT TYPES

Three types of grants are available in the Clean Energy Communities Leadership Round: Designation Grants, Point-Based Grants, and Action Grants. Each grant award will result in a separate grant agreement with NYSEDA, except for in cases where the grant amount is \$5,000 or less which are paid in full directly by check. To access grant funds, the local government must submit a Clean Energy Communities grant application which is subject to NYSEDA approval. Any \$20,000 or greater grant award where the grant project is in a New York State Disadvantaged Community may be eligible for an additional \$10,000 bonus grant. Read more in the “How to Access Grant Funding” section of this Guidance Document.

Designation Grants

The Clean Energy Community designation is available to communities that complete four high-impact actions. At least two (2) of the high-impact actions must be completed after August 1, 2016. In the Leadership Round, communities that earn the Clean Energy Community designation and did not receive a previous designation grant are eligible to apply for a one-time \$5,000 grant. This grant opportunity is available retroactively to any community that has earned the designation but did not receive a grant prior to January 26, 2021, except for those communities that did not receive a grant because they missed a grant application deadline. Eligible communities shall apply within 90 days of award notification or shall forfeit their funding.

Point-Based Grants

Communities collect points by completing high-impact actions. Each high-impact action has a certain number of points assigned to it. The object is to collect enough points to cross certain point thresholds to become eligible for larger grant amounts before they are all claimed. When NYSEDA approves a high-impact action, points are automatically added to the applicant’s scorecard. Each community’s point balance is available at www.nyserda.ny.gov/cec.

Once a community earns the required number of points, it will be notified by email of the opportunity to apply for a points-based grant, if available. The number of available grants is identified by community size (Census 2010) and geography in the tables below. Grants are expected to remain available until all grants are awarded in each category. To be eligible for a Point-Based Grant, the applicant shall earn some new points after January 26, 2021. Large size communities (40,000+ population) have potential to be awarded \$250,000 in point-based grants. Small/medium sized communities (0-39,999 population) have potential to be awarded \$100,000 in point-based grants.

	Municipality Size by Population	Number of Awards	Grant Amount
EARN 3,000+ POINTS	Large (40,000+)	50 statewide	\$30,000
	Small/Medium (0-39,999)	40 per region	\$10,000
EARN 4,000+ POINTS	Large (40,000+)	20 statewide	\$70,000
	Small/Medium (0-39,999)	10 per region	\$20,000
EARN 5,000+ POINTS	Large (40,000+)	10 statewide	\$150,000
	Small/Medium (0-39,999)	4 per region	\$70,000

Action Grants

An Action Grant is available for Community Campaigns. The requirements for the Action Grant may be found in the High-Impact Actions section of this guidance document. Once a community completes all stated requirements, NYSEDA will send an email notifying the applicant how to apply including the grant amount for which the community is eligible and the grant application due date.

HIGH-IMPACT ACTIONS

The specific requirements to complete each high-impact action is provided on the pages following this high-level list.

200 POINTS	UNIFIED SOLAR PERMIT Adopt the NYS Unified Solar Permit to streamline the approvals process for small-scale solar
200 POINTS	ENERGY CODE ENFORCEMENT TRAINING Train code compliance officers in best practices in energy code enforcement
Up to 500 POINTS	PACE FINANCING Authorize a financing program for clean energy upgrades to commercial or non-profit property
500 POINTS	CLEAN ENERGY UPGRADES Achieve a 10 percent reduction in the greenhouse gas emissions from municipal buildings
500 POINTS	100% RENEWABLE ELECTRICITY Use renewable energy resources for all the electricity supply needs of municipal government
700 POINTS	CLEAN HEATING AND COOLING DEMO Convert a municipal facility to all-electric with ground- or air-source heat pumps
UP TO 800 POINTS	CLIMATE SMART COMMUNITIES CERTIFICATION Earn Climate Smart Communities Certification to reduce carbon emissions and build resilience
Up to 900 POINTS	LED STREET LIGHTS Convert at least half of the cobra-head or decorative-style street lights to LED
UP TO 1,500 POINTS	COUNTY-HOSTED TRAININGS County governments convene and support clean energy planning by local governments
UP TO 1,000 POINTS	CLEAN FLEETS Deploy light to heavy duty electric vehicles, or install electric vehicle charging stations
UP TO 1,100 POINTS	BENCHMARKING Adopt a policy to track and report the energy use of municipal buildings or large private buildings
UP TO 2,000 POINTS	COMMUNITY CHOICE AGGREGATION Dramatically reduce carbon emissions by transitioning to a clean, renewable electricity supply
ACTION GRANTS	
Up to 3,800 POINTS	UP TO \$290,000 COMMUNITY CAMPAIGNS Undertake one or more campaigns to promote clean energy in your community

UNIFIED SOLAR PERMIT

200 points | Applicable if you enforce the Uniform Code for private buildings

NYSERDA Clean Energy Communities

RATIONALE

The Unified Solar Permit (revised October 2016) is a standardized permit application designed to streamline the approval process for installing solar in the community. The standardized permit is expected to cut costs by creating a uniform permitting process in municipalities across the State. As municipalities adopt the permit, installers and municipalities alike will save time and resources permitting solar electric systems. An expedited process will allow these standard systems to pass quickly through the jurisdictional review process, freeing up time for all involved parties, decreasing the overall installation time for customers, and allowing non-standard systems the necessary time for detailed review.

REQUIREMENTS

Demonstrate completion of the Unified Solar Permit action by submitting the following documentation:

- Submit a certified copy of an executed local law, ordinance, or resolution adopting the New York State Unified Solar Permit (a template resolution and the Unified Solar Permit can be accessed in the Unified Solar Permit toolkit at www.nyserda.ny.gov/cec). Date of completion is when the legislation was adopted.
- Submit a copy of the Unified Solar Permit being used by the applying jurisdiction.
- Please note that an updated version of the New York State Unified Solar Permit was released in October 2016. NYSERDA will only accept the new version of the permit.
- Communities that completed the Unified Solar Permit action prior to the launch of the Leadership Round will be awarded points retroactively.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Review the NY-Sun Solar Guidebook for Local Governments which is a useful reference containing supporting documents for local governments and code officials. In addition to the New York State Unified Solar Permit, the guidebook includes topics such as roof top solar access requirements for firefighters and first responders, information on the Real Property Tax Law 487 exempting solar PV systems, a fact sheet for Agricultural Districts, a fact sheet for landowners considering solar leases, information on land use planning, and a model solar energy law.
- Consider a flat fee that fairly reflects the time needed for municipal staff to review and issue the solar permit.
- Post information on the municipal website about the permit application process including timelines for permit application review and issuance.

RESOURCES

- Dedicated and knowledgeable local Clean Energy Communities Coordinators are available to assist municipal staff as they implement this action. To access this support, please send an email to cec@nyserda.ny.gov.
- A toolkit of resources is available at www.nyserda.ny.gov/cec.

ENERGY CODE ENFORCEMENT TRAINING

200 points | Applicable if you enforce the Uniform Code for private buildings

RATIONALE

The Energy Code is a minimum building standard for energy efficiency, applicable to new construction and renovation of commercial and residential buildings in New York State. The Energy Code is a complex document and one of nine building codes in New York State, making implementation and enforcement complex and time consuming. Since buildings represent roughly 60% of New York's total energy consumption, there is significant opportunity for energy savings through improved Energy Code compliance.

REQUIREMENTS

Demonstrate completion of the Energy Code Enforcement Training action as follows:

- At least one code official must complete a NYSERDA-approved Clean Energy Communities Energy Code Enforcement Training series including both residential and commercial workshops. Communities that completed Energy Code Enforcement Training prior to January 26, 2021 must retake the training to earn points for this action.
- Due to COVID-19 and other circumstances, trainings may be offered on a limited basis.
- Submit a copy of the notification of completion email, or comparable information to earn credit for this action.
- Date of completion for this action is defined as the date of the notification of completion email. For more information or to enroll in the training program, please send an email to cec@nyserda.ny.gov or visit www.nyserda.ny.gov/cec.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Work with your coordinator to host a training workshop in your jurisdiction.

RESOURCES

- Dedicated and knowledgeable local Clean Energy Communities Coordinators are available to assist municipal staff as they implement this action. To access this support, please send an email to cec@nyserda.ny.gov.
- A toolkit of resources is available at www.nyserda.ny.gov/cec.

PACE FINANCING

200 to 500 points | Applicable to counties and cities outside Westchester County; cities and towns in Westchester County

RATIONALE

Open C-PACE (Property Assessed Clean Energy), also known as Commercial PACE Financing, is a program adopted by an eligible local government that allows property owners to pay back the cost of clean energy upgrades to their commercial or non-profit property over a term that can go as long as 20-30 years and is secured through a benefit assessment lien on the improved property. Open C-PACE enables eligible commercially-owned buildings in New York State to secure private funds to tackle significant energy upgrades and renewable energy projects in existing building and new construction. This financing structure is available through the Energy Improvement Corporation (EIC) for projects that aim to install permanent improvements that reduce energy costs in existing buildings. EIC is a local development corporation and a New York State nonprofit established specifically to assist municipalities and property owners achieve long-term energy savings and/or generate renewable power for use on site.

REQUIREMENTS

Demonstrate completion of the PACE Financing action by completing one or more:

1. Open C-PACE Authorization - 200 Points

Submit a screenshot of EIC's List of Participating Municipalities that shows the applying jurisdiction listed as a current EIC member having authorized the Open C-PACE product, or comparable information. Authorization requires adoption of a local law and signing a municipal agreement with EIC (template documents provided by EIC). Non-EIC PACE programs are also eligible. Date of completion is when the local government became an EIC member or when the Non-EIC PACE program is adopted. Communities that received NYSERDA approval for the Energize NY Finance action must submit documentation under this category to earn points for this action.

2. Projects – 300 Points

Submit documentation from EIC demonstrating closing of one or more Open C-PACE projects located in the jurisdiction, or comparable information. To be eligible, the jurisdiction must complete the PACE Financing – Open C-PACE Authorization action. Date of completion is date of the first finance closing.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- If you are interested in establishing an Open C-PACE program, please contact the Energy Improvement Corporation at (914) 302-7300 x8105 or by email at ssmiley@eicpace.org.
- Once adopted, promote Open C-PACE as part of the municipality's economic development strategy.

RESOURCES

- Dedicated and knowledgeable local Clean Energy Communities Coordinators are available to assist municipal staff as they implement this action. To access this support, please send an email to cec@nyserda.ny.gov.
- A toolkit of resources is available at www.nyserda.ny.gov/cec.

CLEAN ENERGY UPGRADES

500 points | Applicable to all communities

RATIONALE

Clean Energy Upgrades are energy efficiency and renewable energy projects in municipal buildings and facilities. By replacing outdated equipment with new smart and efficient technology, municipalities are well positioned to save energy and money over time. State programs can help get these projects accomplished with no or low up-front cost while generating net savings to the bottom line. Everything from municipal headquarters to public works facilities, fire stations, police precincts, parks facilities, and even water treatment plants are good candidates for upgrades. Perhaps most important, Clean Energy Upgrades show leadership and contribute to more sustainable communities.

REQUIREMENTS

Demonstrate completion of the Clean Energy Upgrades action by submitting the following documentation:

- Submit an ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager benchmarking report including energy use information for each municipal building that is owned or occupied by the applying jurisdiction that is 1,000 square feet or larger. The report shall include each building's energy use intensity (EUI), annual greenhouse gas emissions, and an energy performance score where available. The report should cover at least 12 months but not more than 36 months of energy use of the portfolio from the year(s) prior to the commencement date of the upgrades as the baseline.
- Share read-only access to the applicant's Portfolio Manager account with NYSERDA and submit an email from Portfolio Manager, or comparable information, stating that NYSERDA has accepted the sharing request.
- Submit succinct and relevant documentation that demonstrates a minimum 10 percent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions against the baseline with projects that are substantially complete by the date of submission. The documentation may include 1) an ASHRAE Energy Audit, 2) an approved pre-and-post engineering study that identifies implemented Energy Conservation Measures, 3) an executed contract or agreement, or 4) comparable information.
- Submit a complete Clean Energy Upgrades Calculator, available in the Clean Energy Upgrades toolkit at www.nyserdera.ny.gov/cec. Please be sure to complete the most recent version. Information requested will include, but is not limited to, specific equipment or infrastructure upgrades and estimated energy savings of implemented measures.
- The required reduction in greenhouse gas emissions may be achieved with energy efficiency improvement or renewable energy sources including solar, community distributed generation (CDG), wind, geothermal, or anaerobic digester gas.
- Each project component of the upgrades must be substantially complete after August 1, 2016.
- Date of completion for this action is defined as the date the upgrade achieves substantial completion.

Communities that completed the Clean Energy Upgrades action prior to the launch of the Leadership Round will be awarded points retroactively.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The New York Power Authority (NYPA) provides turn-key energy efficiency upgrades to municipal buildings of qualifying jurisdictions. Working closely with staff at the municipality, NYPA and their contractors handle every aspect of design and construction. NYPA offers low-interest rate financing and projects can typically be accomplished with no or low up-front cost while generating net savings to the bottom line.
- Energy performance contracts can also be used to procure energy savings and facility improvements with no or low up-front capital costs.
- Consult the local utility to identify incentives that may be available for energy efficiency improvements.

RESOURCES

- Dedicated and knowledgeable local Clean Energy Communities Coordinators are available to assist municipal staff as they implement this action. To access this support, please send an email to cec@nyserdera.ny.gov.
- A toolkit of resources is available at www.nyserdera.ny.gov/cec.

100% RENEWABLE ELECTRICITY

500 points | Applicable to all communities

RATIONALE

A local government's decision to purchase renewable energy for its electricity needs highlights its role as a leader in addressing climate change and protecting the environment.

REQUIREMENTS

Demonstrate completion of the 100% Renewable Electricity action by submitting the following documentation:

- Submit a completed 100% Renewable Electricity Certification Form (accessed in the 100% Renewable Electricity toolkit at www.nyserda.ny.gov/cec) or comparable information. Requested information includes the average annual load of all municipal electricity accounts and the percentage of the load that will be matched with New York renewable energy certificates (RECs) that are retired in a [*New York State Generation Attribute Tracking System*](#) (NYGATS). RECs generated by state-owned resources including New York Power Authority-owned facilities do not qualify. RECs must be produced in the same calendar year as the electricity consumption. To earn credit for this action, the electricity consumption must occur in 2020 and later.
- Date of completion for this action is defined as the date after January 1, 2020 when the renewable energy is delivered.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Ensure that the supplier meets the specific requirements for RECs listed above.
- To help manage and understand the annual load of all municipal electricity accounts, consider benchmarking using Energy Star Portfolio Manager and sharing read-only access with NYSERDA.

RESOURCES

- Dedicated and knowledgeable local Clean Energy Communities Coordinators are available to assist municipal staff as they implement this action. To access this support, please send an email to cec@nyserda.ny.gov.
- A toolkit of resources is available at www.nyserda.ny.gov/cec.

CLEAN HEATING AND COOLING DEMO

700 points | Applicable to all communities

RATIONALE

Currently, fossil-fuel based thermal energy – primarily natural gas, propane and oil – is the main energy source for space heating and domestic hot water in the residential and commercial sectors. It is responsible for about one-third of New York’s energy-related greenhouse gas emissions. Clean heating and cooling technologies such as ground- and air-source heat pumps provide environmental benefits, energy bill savings, increased comfort levels and health benefits compared to conventional heating and cooling technologies. Local governments can lead by example and play an important role in encouraging adoption of ground- and air-source heat pump systems. This action is designed to demonstrate the benefits of clean heating and cooling technologies.

REQUIREMENTS

Demonstrate completion of this action by submitting the following documentation:

1. Submit a signed Clean Heating and Cooling Demo Certification Form, available in the Clean Heating and Cooling Demo toolkit at www.nyserda.ny.gov/cec, confirming that at least one municipal building owned and operated by the applying jurisdiction has been recently converted or built to use ground- and/or air-source heat pump systems as the building’s primary heating and cooling systems. Heat pump water heating systems may be included but are not required. The building must be 1,000 square feet or larger and open to the public all year long.
2. Submit at least one photograph of an educational kiosk, display, and/or materials intended to educate municipal staff and the public about beneficial electrification.
- Date of completion for this action is defined as the date that ground- and/or air-source heat pump systems become operational as the building’s primary heating and cooling systems. This date must be after August 1, 2016 to earn credit for this action. Communities that completed the Clean Heating and Cooling Demo action prior to November 18, 2021 will be awarded 200 additional points retroactively.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Combine with 100% Renewable Electricity high-impact action to achieve a 100% net zero carbon building.
- Install an electric vehicle charging station to support beneficial electrification in the transportation sector.

RESOURCES

- Dedicated and knowledgeable local Clean Energy Communities Coordinators are available to assist municipal staff as they implement this action. To access this support, please send an email to cec@nyserda.ny.gov.
- A toolkit of resources is available at www.nyserda.ny.gov/cec.

CLIMATE SMART COMMUNITIES CERTIFICATION

600 to 800 points | Applicable to all communities

RATIONALE

The Climate Smart Communities Certification (CSC) program provides local governments with a robust framework to guide their climate action and celebrates the leadership of high-performing communities. Designed around the CSC pledge elements, the certification program awards points for actions that provide additional opportunities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and build community resilience to climate change.

REQUIREMENTS

Demonstrate completion of the Climate Smart Communities Certification action by completing one or more of the following:

1. Bronze Certification - 600 Points

Submit a screenshot of the www.climatesmart.ny.gov website or comparable information, that demonstrates the applying jurisdiction has been listed as a Bronze or Silver Certified Climate Smart Community.

2. Silver Certification – 200 Points

Submit a screenshot of the www.climatesmart.ny.gov website or comparable information, that demonstrates the applying jurisdiction has been listed as a Silver Certified Climate Smart Community.

*Please note that if your community is Silver CSC Certified, you are eligible to earn credit for both Bronze Certification and Silver Certification. Please submit for each separately to earn 800 points total.

- Date of completion is when NYSDEC provides notification to the community regarding its achievement of the applicable certification level. The certification level must be current at the time of application.
- Communities that completed the Climate Smart Communities Bronze Certification action prior to the launch of the Leadership Round will be awarded points retroactively.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- For more information, please visit www.climatesmart.ny.gov.

RESOURCES

- Dedicated and knowledgeable local Clean Energy Communities Coordinators are available to assist municipal staff as they implement this action. To access this support, please send an email to cec@nyserda.ny.gov.
- A toolkit of resources is available at www.nyserda.ny.gov/cec.

LED STREET LIGHTS

200 to 900 points | Applicable to all communities

RATIONALE

By replacing conventional street lights with energy efficient LED technology, communities can reduce street light energy use by as much as 65 percent, generating cost savings and emission reductions. In addition, street light projects can contribute to creating a well-lit, safer, and more attractive community. LED street lights last up to 100,000 hours and require much less maintenance than conventional street lights. The opportunity to incorporate smart, connected technology such as dimming functions and parking management offers a world of almost unlimited possibilities. Even those communities that do not own their own streetlights have options for converting street lights in their jurisdiction to LED.

REQUIREMENTS

Complete one or more of the following to earn credit for the LED Street Lights action:

1. Cobra Head Street Lights – 700 Points

Demonstrate completion of this action by submitting the following documentation:

- Submit a completed LED Street Light Certification Form (accessed in the LED Street Lights toolkit at www.nyserda.ny.gov/cec) or comparable information demonstrating that a minimum of 50 percent of all municipal and utility-owned cobra-head-style have been converted to LED. This documentation should include the number of street lights converted, including the proportion of converted cobra-head street lights to total cobra-head street lights.
- A minimum of 10 fixtures must be converted to LED to qualify per jurisdiction.
- Date of completion is the date on which fifty (50) percent of the streetlights or, for those communities with less than 20 streetlights, 10 fixtures were converted to LED.

Communities that completed the LED Street Lights action prior to the launch of the Leadership Round will be awarded points retroactively.

2. Decorative Street Lights - 200 Points

Demonstrate completion of this action by submitting the following documentation:

- Submit a completed LED Street Light Certification Form (accessed in the LED Street Lights toolkit at www.nyserda.ny.gov/cec) or comparable information demonstrating that a minimum of 50 percent of all municipal and utility-owned decorative-style street lights have been converted to LED. This documentation should include the number of street lights converted, including the proportion of converted decorative street lights to total decorative street lights.
- A minimum of 10 fixtures must be converted to LED to qualify per jurisdiction.
- Date of completion is the date on which fifty (50) percent of the streetlights or, for those communities with less than 20 streetlights, 10 fixtures were converted to LED.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Check with the local utility regarding options and incentives for converting street lights to LED.
- Municipalities that do not own their own street lights may pursue a negotiated agreement with their utility for transfer of ownership of the complete system of street lights and supporting infrastructure.
- The New York Power Authority (NYPA) offers a program to convert street lights to LEDs.

RESOURCES

- Dedicated and knowledgeable local Clean Energy Communities Coordinators are available to assist municipal staff as they implement this action. To access this support, please send an email to cec@nyserda.ny.gov.
- A toolkit of resources is available at www.nyserda.ny.gov/cec.

COUNTY-HOSTED TRAININGS

300 to 1,500 points | Applicable to County Governments

RATIONALE

County Governments are uniquely positioned to convene and support local governments to advance local action on clean energy. The County-Hosted Trainings high-impact action is designed to help communities understand how to manage responsible clean energy development in their communities.

REQUIREMENTS

Complete one or more of the following to earn credit for the County-Hosted Trainings action. Trainings must be hosted by the county in coordination with NYSERDA Clean Energy Community Coordinators with a minimum four (4) weeks lead time. To qualify, a municipal staff member, elected official, or member of an official municipal board or committee from at least 35 percent of the municipalities in the county must attend. Trainers will be provided by NYSERDA and may only be available on a limited basis. The host county is responsible for logistics, publicizing and promoting the training, and tracking attendance. Each county will have the opportunity to host each course once. If the attendance threshold is not met, the county may document their municipalities' attendance at a course hosted by another entity, including other counties. However, the county seeking credit for their municipalities' attendance is responsible for seeking out those alternate training opportunities, gathering documentation demonstrating attendance, compiling documentation, and submitting to NYSERDA. NYSERDA will not schedule a second session of the same course for the same county. Counties may choose to reschedule sessions by notifying NYSERDA at least three business days prior to the anticipated training sessions. If there are extenuating circumstances that prevent a scheduled course from occurring with fewer than three days' notice, NYSERDA, at its sole discretion, may allow the county to schedule a make-up session.

The host county representative must be involved as a partner in the presentation by providing an introduction explaining why the topic is necessary and important in the county, and helping with Q&A. Trainings may be virtual or in-person. All trainings may be eligible for continuing education credit for Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals Members, subject to approval by the municipality. Where indicated below, Building Safety Inspectors and Code Enforcement Officials are eligible for in-service credits from the NYS Department of State, Division of Building Standards and Codes.

- To earn points, submit a completed County-Hosted Trainings Certification Form (accessed in the County-Hosted Trainings toolkit at www.nyserda.ny.gov/cec) including a list with the name and date of the training, and attendee information – including name, title, email or phone number, and associated municipality – to demonstrate the requirements of this action have been met. A toolkit of resources is available at www.nyserda.ny.gov/cec.

1. Overview of the Model Solar Energy Law - 300 Points

Provides an in-depth review of the customizable template zoning law contained in NYSERDA's Solar Guidebook for Local Governments. Municipal board members, code enforcement officials, and staff are encouraged to attend.

2. Overview of the Model Battery Energy Storage System Law - 300 Points

Provides an in-depth review of the customizable template zoning law contained in NYSERDA's Battery Energy Storage System Guidebook for Local Governments. Municipal board members, code enforcement officials, and staff are encouraged to attend.

3. Clean Energy and Your Comprehensive Plan - 300 Points

Offers an introduction to best practices and strategies for incorporating clean energy goals and objectives into a new or updated municipal comprehensive plan. Municipal board members, planning staff, and comprehensive plan committee members are encouraged to attend.

4. Battery Energy Storage for First Responders - 300 Points (Approved for 2-hours of In-Service training credit)

Introduces key safety considerations for battery energy storage systems for codes and building officials; covered topics include fire prevention considerations and compliance with the 2020 NYS Uniform Code. Code enforcement and building officials are encouraged to attend.

5. Solar PV Permitting and Inspecting - 300 Points (Approved for 2-hours of In-Service training credit)

Offers an in-depth review of permitting and inspecting solar energy systems in New York State from start to finish; topics covered include the NYS Unified Solar Permit and various components of the NYS Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code. Code enforcement and building officials are encouraged to attend.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Contact your Clean Energy Communities Coordinator early in the planning process.

RESOURCES

- Dedicated and knowledgeable local Clean Energy Communities Coordinators are available to assist municipal staff as they implement this action. To access this support, please send an email to cec@nyserda.ny.gov.
- A toolkit of resources is available at www.nyserda.ny.gov/cec.

CLEAN FLEETS

200 to 1,000 points / Applicable to All Communities

RATIONALE

Clean Fleets is an effort by local governments to invest in electric vehicles and infrastructure while increasing opportunities for constituents to access electric vehicle charging stations. Compared to gasoline-powered cars, Electric Vehicles (EVs) are more energy efficient and cost about 50 to 70% less to operate per mile. EVs reduce greenhouse gas emissions and pollutants that cause smog and acid rain. Charging stations are being installed at a wide variety of locations across New York State.

REQUIREMENTS

Complete one or more of the following to earn credit for the Clean Fleets action. Communities may only apply once for #1, 2, or 3.

1. Charging Stations - 200 Points

Submit a completed Clean Fleets Certification Form (accessed in the Clean Fleets toolkit at www.nyserda.ny.gov/cec) or comparable information to demonstrate municipal provision of either two (2) or more Level 2 charging ports or one (1) or more DC fast charge ports. Equipment must be active at the time of submittal. The municipality must own or lease the equipment. Charging Stations may be used for government operations or public use. Date of completion is when the equipment became operational.

2. Light/Medium Duty Electric Vehicles - 300 Points

Submit a completed Clean Fleets Certification Form (accessed in the Clean Fleets toolkit at www.nyserda.ny.gov/cec) or comparable information to demonstrate municipal purchase and deployment of at least one plug-in hybrid or battery-electric vehicle. A plug-in hybrid electric vehicle is an electric car that plugs in and runs on electricity, but has a gasoline engine to power the car if the battery is depleted. A battery-electric vehicle is an all-electric vehicle. Vehicles must be new and manufactured for use primarily on public streets, roads, and highways and have a maximum speed capability of at least fifty-five miles per hour. The vehicle(s) must be active at the time of submittal. Class 7 or 8 vehicles should be submitted under Clean Fleets – Heavy Duty Electric Vehicles. Date of completion is when the equipment became operational.

3. Heavy Duty Electric Vehicles - 400 Points

Submit a completed Clean Fleets Certification Form (accessed in the Clean Fleets toolkit at www.nyserda.ny.gov/cec) or comparable information to demonstrate municipal purchase and deployment of at least one Class 7 or 8 plug-in hybrid or battery-electric vehicle. A plug-in hybrid electric vehicle is an electric car that plugs in and runs on electricity, but has a gasoline engine to power the car if the battery is depleted. A battery-electric vehicle is an all-electric vehicle. Vehicles must be new and manufactured for use primarily on public streets, roads, and highways and have a maximum speed capability of at least fifty-five miles per hour. School busses and vehicles used primarily for fixed-route public transit such as a transit bus or "body-on-chassis" minibus are also eligible. Vehicle(s) must be active at the time of submittal. Date of completion is when the equipment became operational.

Communities that completed the Clean Fleets action prior to the Leadership Round will be awarded 100 points retroactively. Communities may earn additional points by completing the Clean Fleets actions listed above, provided the date of completion for those actions is after January 26, 2021.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Check with your Coordinator to see what incentives are available.

RESOURCES

- Dedicated and knowledgeable local Clean Energy Communities Coordinators are available to assist municipal staff as they implement this action. To access this support, please send an email to cec@nyserda.ny.gov.
- A toolkit of resources is available at www.nyserda.ny.gov/cec.

BENCHMARKING

100 to 1,100 points / Applicable to All Communities

RATIONALE

Benchmarking is a policy that a local government adopts that requires the annual reporting of energy used in buildings. Local governments may require the annual disclosure of energy used in municipal buildings or in large private buildings. Measuring and sharing data on building energy use will help identify opportunities to cut energy waste.

REQUIREMENTS

Complete one or more of the following to earn credit for the Benchmarking action:

1. Benchmarking - Municipal Buildings - 100 Points

Submit a certified copy of an executed local law, ordinance, or resolution (template legislation can be accessed in the Benchmarking toolkit at www.nyserda.ny.gov/cec) that requires the applying jurisdiction to make available to the public on the internet on an annual basis, energy use information for each municipal building that is owned or occupied by the applying jurisdiction that is 1,000 square feet or larger. At a minimum, publicly disclosed energy use information shall include each building's energy use intensity (EUI), annual greenhouse gas emissions, and an energy performance score where available. Date of completion is when the legislation was adopted. Communities that received NYSERDA approval for this action prior to January 26, 2021 will be awarded points retroactively. The legislation must require the following:

- Create an ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager Account
- Gather basic information required by Portfolio Manager and set up property profile(s)
- Obtain monthly, whole building energy use data for all fuel types including, but not limited to, electricity, natural gas, fuel oil, chilled water, steam, and diesel
- Enter property uses and details into profile(s)
- Enter energy use data for all fuel types
- Generate and review the building's report in Portfolio Manager
- Submit the report to the municipality through Portfolio Manager
- Make available to the public on the internet annual summary statistics for each covered property including Energy Use Intensity (EUI), annual greenhouse gas emissions, an energy performance score where available, and other descriptive information as required by Portfolio Manager

2. Benchmarking - Advanced Reporting - 200 Points

Submit a screenshot of a webpage on the applying jurisdiction's website where a benchmarking report is posted that includes no less than 24-months of energy use information as described above for municipal buildings. If the jurisdiction does not have a website, the jurisdiction must attest that the report is available upon request.

Share your community's Portfolio Manager account with NYSERDA. Add "NYSERDAcec1" contact in your My Contacts. Share with "view all read only access" permissions to the NYSERDAcec1 contact for all buildings and meters in your Portfolio Manager account. Submit a screenshot on the Sharing Tab of your Portfolio Manager account which shows an accepted share request with NYSERDAcec1, or comparable information, stating that NYSERDA has accepted the sharing request. Date of completion is when the sharing request was accepted.

3. Benchmarking - Large Private Buildings - 800 Points (applicable to cities, towns, and villages over 40,000 pop.)

Submit a copy of an executed local law or ordinance, (template legislation can be accessed in the Benchmarking Private Buildings toolkit at www.nyserda.ny.gov/cec) as described for Municipal Building above, but apply the requirements to the owners of commercial and multifamily buildings 25,000 square feet or larger.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Use benchmarking data to identify buildings with the greatest opportunity for energy and cost savings.

RESOURCES

- Dedicated and knowledgeable local Clean Energy Communities Coordinators are available to assist municipal staff
- as they implement this action. To access this support, please send an email to cec@nyserda.ny.gov. A toolkit of resources is available at www.nyserda.ny.gov/cec.

COMMUNITY CHOICE AGGREGATION

1,500 to 2,000 points / Applicable to city, town, and village governments

RATIONALE

Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) allows local governments to choose where the energy comes from for their community. CCA is a municipal energy procurement model that replaces the utility as the default supplier of electricity for virtually all homes and small businesses within the jurisdiction. CCA puts control of choosing energy supply in local hands. By pooling demand, communities build the clout necessary to negotiate competitive rates with private suppliers and are able to choose cleaner energy. CCA programs that incorporate Opt-Out Community Distributed Generation (CDG) provide potentially thousands of customers access to community-scale renewables. A CCA can allow whole communities to participate in the clean energy economy by ensuring that a greater percentage of electricity is coming from renewable sources.

REQUIREMENTS

Demonstrate completion of the CCA action by completing one or more:

1. 100% Renewable Default Supply Mix – 1,500 Points

- Submit a copy of the approval letter from the New York State Department of Public Service (DPS) naming the applying jurisdiction as authorized to move forward with CCA, or submit a copy of adopted legislation authorizing the municipality's participation in an opt-out CCA program.
- Submit a copy of an executed and current electric service agreement between the applying jurisdiction and an Energy Services Company (ESCO) to supply electricity to participating CCA customers on an opt-out basis that is a default 100% renewable clean energy product mix, or comparable information. The ESCO electric service agreement, or comparable information, should indicate that the ESCO will retire renewable energy certificates (RECs) on behalf of the Municipality in a [New York State Generation Attribute Tracking System \(NYGATS\)](#) Account (with reports on such retirements to the Municipality) in a manner that is compliant with the environmental attributes and delivery rules of the New York Public Service Commission Environmental Disclosure Program. The electrical energy associated with the renewable energy certificates must be consumed at retail in New York State.
- Communities that were approved by NYSERDA for the CCA high-impact action prior to July 1, 2019 must resubmit to earn points for this action.
- Date of completion is the date on which the electric service agreement or addendum was fully executed.

2. Opt-Out Community Distributed Generation (CDG) – 500 Points

- Submit a copy of the DPS approval letter naming the applying jurisdiction as authorized for Opt-Out CDG.
- Submit a completed Opt-Out CDG Certification Form (accessed in the CCA toolkit at www.nyserda.ny.gov/cec) attesting that one or more of the following customers located within the applying jurisdiction have been enrolled into active CDG projects on an opt-out basis:
 - At least 600 residential and small commercial electricity accounts.
 - In cases where the community has fewer than 600 residential and small commercial electricity accounts, at least 50 percent of the residential and small commercial electricity accounts
 - All eligible assistance program participants (APPs)

- Date of completion is the date when customers are enrolled in the Opt-Out CDG program.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Combine CCA with the Community Campaigns high-impact action and offer a range of value-added clean energy products and services.

COMMUNITY CAMPAIGNS

200 to 3,800 points | Action Grant Eligible | Applicable to all communities

RATIONALE

Community-scale campaigns can be an effective way to encourage adoption of new, innovative technologies to generate value and savings for consumers while advancing state and local clean energy goals. Campaigns to promote program opportunities including community solar, clean heating and cooling, and electric vehicles can provide consumers with increased access to clean energy. Campaigns are typically short-term, local efforts that bring together groups of potential customers through widespread outreach and education. Well-organized campaigns are a great way to be active and visible in the community.

Communities that successfully completed an Achievement Level 1 community campaign prior to the issuance of this solicitation that did not receive a grant will be notified of funding eligibility (based on the updated number of awards available) for these previously submitted campaigns. Communities that have completed Community Campaigns for Achievement Levels 2 or 3 in any of the categories below must submit projects, subscriptions, or purchases that have been completed after June 1, 2023. Communities that have previously received a Community Campaign Achievement Level 1 award are not eligible for an additional Achievement Level 1 award.

Please note Community Campaigns for Demand Response has been discontinued. Communities that have submitted scoping documents for Demand Response through the previous PON, and had them approved by NYSEDA, prior to June 1, 2023, will be allowed to submit Step 2 documentation to receive credit for this action item.

REQUIREMENTS

Complete any of the following campaign types, but no more than one campaign per campaign type and Achievement Level, to earn credit for this action. While a single campaign may cover more than one technology, please submit documentation separately under each campaign type.

1. Community Campaign for Community Solar – 200 – 1,000 Points

Commonly referred to as Community Solar, Community Distributed Generation (CDG) is a renewable energy project that will typically offer guaranteed cost savings to subscribers. The local government enters partnerships with regional CDG projects and promotes Community Solar subscriptions to their constituents. CDG projects may include solar, wind, or hydrofacilities. CDG subscription related to the applying jurisdiction’s municipal electric accounts are not eligible to be counted as a customer. Community Solar providers must be listed on the NYS Power to Choose Distributed Energy Resources (DER) list at <http://documents.dps.ny.gov/PTC/der>.

Achievement Level 1 – 200 Points			
Municipality Size by Population	Required Number of Campaign Participants	Action Grant Amount	Number of Awards
Large (40,000+)	25	\$15,000	20
Small/Medium (0-39,999)	10	\$5,000	120

Achievement Level 2 – Additional 300 Points			
Municipality Size by Population	Required Number of Campaign Participants	Action Grant Amount	Number of Awards

Large (40,000+)	100	\$30,000	15
Small/Medium (0-39,999)	50	\$10,000	60

Achievement Level 3 – Additional 500 Points			
Municipality Size by Population	Required Number of Campaign Participants	Action Grant Amount	Number of Awards
Large (40,000+)	250	\$60,000	10
Small/Medium (0-39,999)	100	\$20,000	30

2. Community Campaign for Electric Vehicles – 200 – 1,000 Points

The local government along with partner organizations and volunteers initiate and develop partnerships with car dealerships, platform providers, and/or other EV industry partners to offer local residents and businesses a variety of makes and models of electric vehicles. The offer may be promoted through ride and drive events and other outreach efforts. Vehicles must be new and purchased to qualify. Electric Vehicles purchased by the applying jurisdiction are not eligible to be counted as a customer.

Achievement Level 1 – 200 Points			
Municipality Size by Population	Required Number of Campaign Participants	Action Grant Amount	Number of Awards
Large (40,000+)	10	\$15,000	20
Small/Medium (0-39,999)	5	\$5,000	40

Achievement Level 2 – Additional 300 Points			
Municipality Size by Population	Required Number of Campaign Participants	Action Grant Amount	Number of Awards
Large (40,000+)	50	\$25,000	15
Small/Medium (0-39,999)	15	\$7,500	20

Achievement Level 3 – Additional 500 Points			
Municipality Size by Population	Required Number of Campaign Participants	Action Grant Amount	Number of Awards
Large (40,000+)	100	\$40,000	5
Small/Medium (0-39,999)	50	\$15,000	10

3. Community Campaign for Clean Heating and Cooling – 500 - 1,800 Points

The aim of Clean Heating and Cooling is to efficiently use electrical energy to replace other forms of energy,

such as fossil fuels. The local government along with partner organizations and volunteers organize a structured campaign to encourage the adoption of clean heating and cooling technologies (e.g., ground- and air- source heat pump systems and heat pump water heaters) to retrofit homes, businesses, and community institutions. Campaign project submittals must be clean heating or cooling technologies. Installations in the applying jurisdiction's municipal buildings are not eligible to be counted as a customer.

Achievement Level 1 – 500 Points			
Municipality Size by Population	Required Number of Campaign Participants	Action Grant Amount	Number of Awards
Large (40,000+)	10	\$15,000	30
Small/Medium (0-39,999)	5	\$5,000	90

Achievement Level 2 – Additional 600 Points			
Municipality Size by Population	Required Number of Campaign Participants	Action Grant Amount	Number of Awards
Large (40,000+)	20	\$30,000	20
Small/Medium (0-39,999)	10	\$10,000	45

Achievement Level 3 – Additional 700 Points			
Municipality Size by Population	Required Number of Campaign Participants	Action Grant Amount	Number of Awards
Large (40,000+)	30	\$60,000	10
Small/Medium (0-39,999)	15	\$20,000	20

To earn credit for this action, each campaign must complete the following steps:

Step 1 – During the planning phase of the campaign, the applying jurisdiction must visit the “Submit Action Item Documentation” page at www.nyserda.ny.gov/cec and submit a completed Community Campaigns Scoping Document which is available in the Community Campaigns toolkit at www.nyserda.ny.gov/cec. NYSERDA will review the scoping document and provide notification by email if the campaign may proceed.

Step 2 – Once the campaign is complete, the applying jurisdiction must return to the “Submit Action Item Documentation” page at www.nyserda.ny.gov/cec and submit the following documentation:

- Submit documentation to demonstrate direct municipal participation in a campaign. Documentation should be dated and include the name of the applying jurisdiction, and may consist of one or more of the following: a press release, a flyer from an event hosted by the jurisdiction, a website screenshot, a local press article, a certified resolution, or comparable information.
- Submit a completed Customer List (a template is available in the Community Campaigns toolkit at www.nyserda.ny.gov/cec). The campaign must achieve at least the number of customers/participants as indicated in the tables for each campaign type. The Customer List must include the location, name of the

installer/supplier, and the date the project was installed or vehicle purchased. Installation / purchase dates must be after NYSERDA approval of the campaign scoping document to qualify.

- Customers/participants must reside within the boundaries of the applying jurisdiction.
- Date of completion for this action is defined as the date on which NYSERDA approved the scoping document.

ACTION GRANT ELIGIBILITY

Demonstrate eligibility for a Community Campaign Action Grant by complying with the following requirements:

- Complete a Community Campaign type and receive NYSERDA approval.
- Communities may receive no more than one grant per campaign type per Achievement Level.
- Customer/participant counts are not cumulative between Achievement Levels. New customers/participants must be recorded in accordance with the minimum Achievement Level threshold.
- Communities must submit each completed Achievement Level separately.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Design an integrated campaign that offers packages and options that cover more than one clean energy product or service.
- Consider launching one or more Community Campaigns in conjunction with a Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) program.
- Team up with individuals, organizations, and nearby jurisdictions to develop a strong volunteer base to support the campaign.

RESOURCES

- Dedicated and knowledgeable local Clean Energy Communities Coordinators are available to assist municipal staff as they implement this action. To access this support, please send an email to cec@nyserda.ny.gov.
- A toolkit of resources is available at www.nyserda.ny.gov/cec.

HOW TO ACCESS GRANT FUNDING

Once a community completes all stated requirements for a grant, NYSERDA will send an email to the community's representative who submitted the action item documentation. This email will explain how to apply for the grant including the grant amount for which the community is eligible and the grant application due date. **The applicant has three months** from the date of this email to submit a grant application. Projects must be ready to commence within six months of award notification and should be complete within three years of contract execution.

Grant applications are accepted through an online grant application portal at www.nyserdera.ny.gov/cec. If you are having any trouble or are unable to submit, please attach all application materials to an email and send to cec@nyserdera.ny.gov. Grants are available on a first-come-first-served basis until all grant awards are claimed or all funds are exhausted. NYSERDA reserves the right to adjust funding levels and eligibility criteria as necessary to ensure the success of the program.

No local cost share is required for grant applications. Grants that are \$5,000 or less are paid in full directly by check. While these smaller grants will not result in contract with NYSERDA, the applicant must describe the clean energy project, program, or initiative it plans to support using this funding. For grants that are larger than \$5,000, communities must propose either a pre-approved project type or a custom project that meets the selection criteria below. If a proposal is not approved, the applicant may revise the proposal and resubmit. Projects must be ready to commence within six months of NYSERDA award notification and should be completed within three years of contract execution.

Extension Requests

At NYSERDA's discretion, one application extension of up to two months may be granted per award. Extension requests should be in writing to cec@nyserdera.ny.gov and submitted at least two weeks prior to the application deadline. It should outline the reasons for the extension and the amount of time requested. Communities that miss the submission deadline without having received an approved extension are at risk of losing their funding.

Eligible Project Types

It is NYSERDA's expectation that all funding through the program be used to support clean energy projects. For grant awards greater than \$5,000, applicants may propose a specific project for funding. The applicant may select from a list of pre-approved project types to expedite the grant application approval process, or propose a custom project.

Pre-Approved Project Types

Applicants proposing pre-approved project types must comply with the performance requirements included in the Statement of Work included within Sample Agreement (Attachment B) template posted to the CEC website. This template includes performance requirements for pre-approved project types including, but not limited to conversion of streetlights to LED, installation of solar, purchase of electric vehicles, installation of electric vehicle charging stations, purchase of electric landscaping equipment, and implementation of eligible building upgrades recommended in a Clean Energy Communities Energy Study or ASHRAE Level II or III Energy Audit. The audit shall have been completed no more than five years prior to application. Applicants may apply to use funding for custom projects. If a custom project proposal includes solar, electric vehicles, charging stations, LED street lights, building upgrades, or electric landscaping equipment, there must be serious and exceptional factors which adversely affected the applicant's ability to apply for these elements as pre-approved project types.

Clean Energy Communities (CEC) Energy Studies

For grant awards greater than \$5,000, applicants may apply to use funds for one or more CEC Energy Studies. Prepared by consultants working on NYSERDA's behalf, the CEC Energy Study is a comprehensive, fuel-neutral, unbiased evaluation of all potential cost effective low-cost/no-cost and capital improvement upgrades, as well as potential electrification measures using a standardized calculation methodology pre-approved by NYSERDA. The cost of the study(ies) will be paid directly by NYSERDA to the third-party vendor. An amount equal to the cost of the CEC Energy Study(ies) will be deducted from the original grant award. This deduction is reflected in the Total Amount of Award

listed at that top of the grant agreement with NYSERDA. If the cost of the study(ies) exceeds the award amount, the applicant may negotiate with the NYSERDA-assigned vendor to pay the difference directly.

Disadvantaged Community Bonus

Any points-based or action grant award in the amount of \$20,000 or greater may be eligible for \$10,000 bonus funding for a clean energy project. To access a bonus, the grant project shall be located in a New York State Disadvantaged Community in the applying jurisdiction. The CEC grant application form is used by NYSEDA to screen for bonus eligibility. If eligible, the bonus amount will be added automatically to the award. To be eligible for a Disadvantaged Community Bonus grant for a custom project type, applicants must demonstrate that the benefits of the project or initiative are confined to the Disadvantaged Community area. Ninety (90) bonus grants are available on a first come, first served basis to eligible communities.

Grant applications will be assessed for the Disadvantaged Community Bonus based upon the definition that is in use at time of application.

For applications submitted under NYSEDA's interim definition, a project location lookup tool is available at <https://www.nyserda.ny.gov/ny/Disadvantaged-Communities>. This applies to all applications submitted by March 26, 2023.

As of March 27, 2023, NYSEDA will be using the disadvantaged communities' definition that was approved by the Climate Justice Working Group. This definition will guide the equitable implementation of the State's work focused on supporting clean and energy efficient investments that help reduce air pollution and greenhouse gasses in disadvantaged communities as required under the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act. Materials on the final DAC criteria, including a list of disadvantaged communities, along with preliminary maps, can be found on the Climate Act website here: <https://climate.ny.gov/resources/climate-justice-working-group/>. A project location lookup tool will be available at <https://climate.ny.gov/resources/disadvantaged-communities-criteria/>. Eligibility is subject to NYSEDA verification.

Selection Criteria for Custom Projects

Applications for custom projects will be evaluated based on the following criteria, with a total number of possible points allocated to each. Applicants that propose a custom project must earn a minimum of 70% of the selection criteria points to be considered eligible.

1. To what extent does the project/initiative have a positive direct impact on energy use and greenhouse gas emissions?
 - Is the proposal likely to achieve direct greenhouse gas emission reductions greater than 1 ton of CO₂ equivalent annually per 10,000 residents?
 - Does the proposal provide a clear estimate along with a brief description/methodology to support these estimates, of annual energy savings and greenhouse gas emission reduction?
2. To what extent does the proposer present a thorough, sound, detailed approach for accomplishing the objectives of their proposal within a reasonable timeframe?
 - Is the project clearly and concisely defined?
 - Are project costs justified based on expected benefits?
 - Is the budget broken down by Task to match the Tasks established in the scope of work?
 - Is there an estimate of the timeframe for completing different phases of the project including the design phase and the construction/implementation phase?
 - If the custom project proposal includes solar, electric landscaping equipment, electric vehicles, charging stations, LED street lights, or building upgrades, are there serious and exceptional factors outside the applicant's control which adversely affected the applicant's ability to apply for these elements as pre-approved project types?
3. To what extent will efforts be made to collaborate with other municipalities and to transfer knowledge to the broader region and state?

- To what extent does the municipality provide specific tools and resources that other municipalities can use to facilitate collaboration or develop their own projects?
 - Is there a strategy in place to promote the project so that several other municipalities are made aware?
 - Will the municipality host an open house, presentation, website posting, or webinar to describe best practices and lessons learned from the project?
4. To what extent will the project/initiative benefit the low-to-moderate income community, leverage public and private dollars, and/or generate economic development benefits (*i.e.*, temporary or permanent job creation and investment)?
- Is the project located in a Disadvantaged Community? To what extent will the project benefit the low-to-moderate income community?
 - Does the proposal include cost-sharing? If cost-sharing is included, is it documented?
 - Does the project provide direct economic development benefits including job creation or retention, savings, investment, or multiplier affects?
 - Approximately how many temporary or permanent jobs is the project likely to create?

Proposal Requirements

Projects will be scored and awarded on a rolling basis. No project or applicant is guaranteed funding. Applications will be reviewed as outlined below.

- The grant application and NYSERDA Portal for submitting the grant application are available at www.nyserda.ny.gov/cec.
- Attachments to PON 3298 includes a spreadsheet-based Grant Application (Attachment A). The “Contract” tab of the Grant Application includes a draft Statement of Work (SOW) included within the Sample Agreement (Attachment B).
- For each funding award, the Grant Application and a letter of commitment on municipal letterhead and signed by the chief elected official of the applying jurisdiction must be uploaded to the NYSERDA Portal.
- NYSERDA may reach out to applicants via email or telephone with specific follow-up questions after reviewing proposals. Should NYSERDA request additional information, applicants will have five business days to respond in order for that information to be considered in the evaluation process.
- Applicants that propose a custom project must earn a minimum of 70% of available selection criteria points to be considered eligible. If a proposal is found to be incomplete or if it does not earn a minimum of 70% of available selection criteria points, the applicant may reapply within two months of notification.
- Review meetings will be held periodically on at least a quarterly basis, depending on the volume of applications.
- NYSERDA may condition awards upon applicant acceptance of requests for minor modifications to project scopes to ensure that NYSERDA program goals are met. NYSERDA reserves the right to request additional information.
- NYSERDA reserves the right to reject proposals that would otherwise be eligible for other existing NYSERDA or other New York State funding opportunities.
- NYSERDA, in order to avoid double-funding projects or measures within projects, may adjust awarded funding amounts at any time based on new information regarding other project funding secured.
- NYSERDA reserves the right to adjust award amounts at its sole discretion.
- Applicants must agree, or provide written exceptions, to NYSERDA’s standard contracting Terms and Conditions, which can be found at www.nyserda.ny.gov/cec.
- All payments made in advance of work being completed are subject to recapture for non-compliance or non-performance.

Metrics Report

It is important to begin considering project benefits at the application stage. Anticipated benefits associated with Clean Energy Communities projects shall be measured. Each successful applicant shall submit preliminary (design) and final (completion) quantified documentation of the benefits of the project, including greenhouse gas reductions and energy savings, determined and documented in Exhibit E of Attachment B, SOW, which can be found on the www.nyserda.ny.gov/cec webpage. Each successful applicant shall design the project to achieve the benefits identified in these submissions. NYSERDA will use the Metrics Report to assess activities in the project, capture the extent of benefits delivered, and gauge performance of the project and of the CEC Program. If requested, the Contractor shall coordinate with the NYSERDA Project Manager to schedule a date for a site inspection. NYSERDA may also request applicable documentation including, but not limited to, photos of the funded project components.

NYSERDA Verification

NYSERDA may independently verify completion of any high-impact action and grant project. NYSERDA may inspect or confirm the validity of the information provided or request additional information at any time.

GENERAL CONDITIONS

Proprietary Information: Careful consideration should be given before confidential information is submitted to NYSERDA as part of the applicant's proposal. Review should include whether it is critical for evaluating a proposal, and whether general, non-confidential information, may be adequate for review purposes. The NYS Freedom of Information Law, Public Officers law, Article 6, provides for public access to information NYSERDA possesses. Public Officers Law, Section 87(2)(d) provides for exceptions to disclosure for records or portions thereof that "are trade secrets or are submitted to an agency by a commercial enterprise or derived from information obtained from a commercial enterprise and which if disclosed would cause substantial injury to the competitive position of the subject enterprise." Information submitted to NYSERDA that the proposer wishes to have treated as proprietary and confidential trade secret information, should be identified and labeled "Confidential" or "Proprietary" on each page at the time of disclosure. This information should include a written request to except it from disclosure, including a written statement of the reasons why the information should be excepted. See Public Officers Law, Section 89(5) and the procedures set forth in 21 NYCRR Part 501 <http://www.nyserda.ny.gov/About/-/media/Files/About/Contact/NYSERDA-Regulations.ashx>. However, NYSERDA cannot guarantee the confidentiality of any information submitted.

Procurement Lobbying Requirements - State Finance Law sections 139-j and 139-k

NYSERDA is required to comply with State Finance Law sections 139-j and 139-k. These provisions contain procurement lobbying requirements which can be found at

<http://www.oqs.ny.gov/aboutoqs/regulations/advisoryCouncil/StatutoryReferences.html>

The attached Proposal Checklist calls for a signature certifying that the proposer will comply with State Finance Law sections 139-j and 139-k and the Disclosure of Prior Findings of Non-responsibility form includes a disclosure statement regarding whether the proposer has been found non-responsible under section 139-j of the State Finance Law within the previous four years.

Tax Law Section 5-a – NYSERDA is required to comply with the provisions of Tax Law Section 5-a, which requires a prospective contractor, prior to entering an agreement with NYSERDA having a value in excess of \$100,000, to certify to the Department of Taxation and Finance (the "Department") whether the contractor, its affiliates, its subcontractors and the affiliates of its subcontractors have registered with the Department to collect New York State and local sales and compensating use taxes. The Department has created a form to allow a prospective contractor to readily make such certification. See, ST-220-TD (available at http://www.tax.ny.gov/pdf/current_forms/st/st220td_fill_in.pdf). Prior to contracting with NYSERDA, the prospective contractor must also certify to NYSERDA whether it has filed such certification with the Department. The Department has created a second form that must be completed by a prospective contractor prior to contacting and filed with NYSERDA. See, ST-220-CA (available at http://www.tax.ny.gov/pdf/current_forms/st/st220ca_fill_in.pdf). The Department has developed guidance for contractors which is available at <http://www.tax.ny.gov/pdf/publications/sales/pub223.pdf>.

Omnibus Procurement Act of 1992 - It is the policy of New York State to maximize opportunities for the participation of New York State business enterprises, including minority- and women-owned business enterprises, as bidders, subcontractors, and suppliers on its procurement Agreements.

Information on the availability of New York subcontractors and suppliers is available from:

Empire State Development
Division For Small Business
625 Broadway
Albany, NY 12207

A directory of certified minority- and women-owned business enterprises is available from:

Empire State Development
Minority and Women's Business Development Division
625 Broadway
Albany, NY 12207

Contract Award

NYSERDA may award a contract based on initial applications without discussion or following limited discussion or negotiations pertaining to the Statement of Work (included within Attachment B, Sample Agreement). Each offer should be submitted using the most favorable cost and technical terms. NYSERDA may request additional data or material to support applications. NYSERDA will use the Sample Agreement including Sample SOW (Attachment B) to contract successful proposals. NYSERDA reserves the right to limit any negotiations to exceptions to standard terms and conditions in the Sample Agreement to those specifically identified in the submitted proposal. Proposers should keep in mind that acceptance of all standard terms and conditions will generally result in a more expedited contracting process. NYSERDA may decline to contract with awardees that are delinquent with respect to any obligation under any previous or active NYSERDA agreement.

Accessibility Requirements

NYSERDA requires contractors producing content intended to be posted to the Web to adhere to New York State's Accessibility Policy. This includes, but is not limited to, deliverables such as: documents (PDF, Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, etc.), audio (.mp3, .wav, etc.), video (.mp4, .mpg, .avi, etc.), graphics (.jpg, .png, etc.), web pages (.html, .aspx, etc.), and other multimedia and streaming media content. For more information, see [*NYSERDA's Accessibility Requirements*](#).

Limitation

This solicitation does not commit NYSERDA to award a contract, pay any costs incurred in preparing a proposal, or to procure or contract for services or supplies. NYSERDA reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals received, to negotiate with all qualified sources, or to cancel in part or in its entirety the solicitation when it is in NYSERDA's best interest. NYSERDA reserves the right to reject proposals based on the nature and number of any exceptions taken to the standard terms and conditions of the Sample Agreement.

Disclosure Requirement

The proposer shall disclose any indictment for any alleged felony, or any conviction for a felony within the past five years, under the laws of the United States or any state or territory of the United States and shall describe circumstances for each. When a proposer is an association, partnership, corporation, or other organization, this disclosure requirement includes the organization and its officers, partners, and directors or members of any similarly governing body. If an indictment or conviction should come to the attention of NYSERDA after the award of a contract, NYSERDA may exercise its stop-work right pending further investigation or terminate the agreement; the contractor may be subject to penalties for violation of any law which may apply in the particular circumstances. Proposers must also disclose if they have ever been debarred or suspended by any agency of the U.S. Government or the New York State Department of Labor.

Disclaimer

All projects must address the qualifications and eligibility requirements listed in this Guidance Document. NYSERDA reserves the right to issue revisions to this solicitation at any time. Any revisions will be announced and posted on NYSERDA's website at www.nyserda.ny.gov. High-Impact Actions may be adjusted, phased out, or newly developed based on a variety of factors including, but not limited to, new opportunities to help communities drive local energy action, level of uptake in communities relative to other actions, changes in the regulatory environment, consistency with NYSERDA and other New York State agency program offerings, and availability of external assistance, such as federal programs, tools, and resources.

EO 16 Protocols

Pursuant to Executive Order No. 16 issued on March 17, 2022, all vendors responding to bids or contracting with New York State must certify, using the form provided as part of this solicitation, their status with regard to conducting business operations in Russia, and that any such business operations in Russia conducted on behalf of the vendor are determined to be permitted under any of the allowable exemptions. The term vendor is intended to encompass bidders prior to contract award, contractors who have received a contract award, contract assignees, or contractors for whom an extension to an existing contract is being pursued. Exemption decisions are in NYSERDA's sole discretion and are final.

decisions. NYSEDA reserves the right to solicit additional materials or information regarding the responses or materials provided by a vendor.

Pursuant to Executive Order No. 16, all vendors will be vetted to ensure that they are not on the federal sanctions list at <https://sanctionsearch.ofac.treas.gov/>. There is no waiver or exemption process for vendors appearing on the federal sanctions list.

The Executive Order remains in effect while sanctions imposed by the federal government are in effect. Accordingly, vendors who may be excluded from award because of current business operations in Russia are nevertheless encouraged to respond to solicitations to preserve their contracting opportunities in case sanctions are lifted during a solicitation, or after award in the case of some solicitations.

Additional Resources

All program resources and guidelines can be found on the Clean Energy Communities webpage at the following location: www.nyserda.ny.gov/cec.

Attachments

Attachment A – Grant Application

Attachment B –Sample Agreement including Statement of Work (SOW)